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METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR PUBLISHING AN ELECTRONIC FILE ATTACHED TO AN ELECTRONIC MAIL MESSAGE

TECHNICAL FIELD

The present invention is generally directed to viewing content associated with an electronic file attached to an electronic mail message. The invention supports publication of content associated with an electronic file attachment by launching a file attachment, thereby resulting in the execution of computer instructions that launch a browser program which displays the content at a web site identified by the file attachment.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Electronic mail programs are used by business and residential users to communicate information contained within the body of an electronic mail message or attached as an electronic file or document to the electronic mail message. For example, a user can save a business report as an electronic document prepared by a word processing program and attach this electronic document to an e-mail message for distribution to designated recipients. Another representative example is the transmission of an electronic mail message having an attached multi-media presentation file, such as a Microsoft "POWERPOINT" slide show, to designated recipients at physically remote locations. Users of electronic mail programs commonly use electronic mail messages as a carrier mechanism for forwarding electronic files or documents via a computer network to one or more designated recipients.

Although the combination of an electronic mail program and a distributed computer network provides an efficient communication system for communicating with multiple parties, the capacity of this electronic mail system to support communications can be degraded by the transfer of messages having large-sized attachments. Electronic mail

In the Specification, before the TECHNICAL FIELD, please add:

Cross-Reference to Related Applications

This application is a continuation of United States Patent Application Serial No.

now U.S. Patent No. 6,651,087,

09/238,445 filed January 28, 1999, the contents of which are incorporated by reference

herein in their entirety.

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